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**Testimony of Connecticut Water Company
Environment Committee
March 12, 2010**

**RE: SB-386, AN ACT CONCERNING THE ADOPTION OF REGULATIONS RELATING TO
WATER USE, PLANNING AND PROTECTION**

The Connecticut Water Company would like to express our support of the intent behind SB-386, *AAC the Adoption of Regulations Relating to Water Use, Planning and Protection*. Connecticut Water is a public water utility that provides water service to nearly 90,000 customers in 55 towns throughout Connecticut. We take seriously our responsibility to supply our customers and the communities we serve with safe, reliable water supplies and are proud of our long record of customer service, regulatory compliance and environmental stewardship.

The stated intent of SB-386 – to create a more informed and coordinated approach among relevant state agencies prior to the adoption of regulations relating to the use, planning or protection of water – is laudable. Indeed, implementing regulations in isolation can have unforeseen and potentially detrimental spillover effects on related programs and policies.

It is our understanding this bill was raised based on concerns voiced by a number of legislators over the potential effects the recently proposed streamflow regulations are projected to have on the state and the countless millions of individuals and businesses that rely on a public water supplies on a daily basis. Envisioned as a means of redressing widespread concern over the proposed regulations and the procedural failure to more fully explore the regulations' wider ramifications, SB-386 would require greater interdepartmental communication and coordination at the onset of any regulatory adoption process pertaining to water.

SB-386 would no doubt improve interagency dialogue. However, Public Act 05-142 already requires the DEP to adopt revised streamflow regulations "after consultation and cooperation with the Department of Public Health, the Department of Public Utility Control [and] an advisory group convened by the Commissioner of Environmental Protection." Clearly, the simple inclusion of other state agencies, while beneficial, can not be viewed as a panacea in and of itself, as evinced by the testimony submitted by the Department of Public Health and other state agencies during the recent public comment period on the streamflow regulations.

Rather, we believe Raised Bill 5477, *AAC the Clean Water Act and Streamflow Regulations*, has significantly greater potential to safeguard the public water supply and ensure new streamflow regulations, when adopted, garner widespread support by achieving the balance mandated by their enabling legislation. Importantly, RB-5477 would require a screening process that would allow the identification and targeting of flow-impaired surface waters for mitigation; it would assess the regulations' impact on public health and safety and provide mechanisms to enable utilities to continue to meet such critical obligations; and it would more fully evaluate the financial implications of the regulations.

We are strongly urging the Public Health Committee to act favorably on RB-5477 and encourage the Environment Committee to likewise support the key elements contained in that legislation. We stand ready to work with the Legislature and other stakeholders, including relevant state agencies, to put in place legislation that will allow the streamflow regulation process to move forward with appropriate safeguards and toward a common goal of developing practical, balanced regulations. Thank you for the opportunity to comment.